(Hemi-Sync® Journal, Vol. XVI, No. 4, Fall 1998)

HEMI-SYNC® INTERVENTION FOR INSOMNIA AND IMMUNE DYSFUNCTION

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I was immersed in watching *Top Gun* with my new larger-than-life surround sound system when Sharon, soon to be my wife, appeared in the doorway with tears streaming down her face. Searing pain down the entire right side of her body made it impossible to stand, sit, walk, or lie down comfortably. Her pain and frustration were unbearable. I felt helpless and powerless. Those minutes were burned into my brain as if branded there—a memory not soon, if ever, forgotten. Sharon could not be still and yet moving only intensified the agony. When she finally sought help, her doctor patted her on the knee and told her, "We all have a few aches and pains now and then." We knew better. Sharon had to do something. We were fortunate to secure an appointment at a regional medical center within the next few weeks.

After weeks of anxious waiting, plus more tests than I could remember and definitely more than Sharon wanted to endure, we had a definitive diagnosis: fibromyalgia. This muscle pain syndrome is not degenerative, is extremely painful, and can be debilitating. They were sorry, but Sharon would have to learn to live with it. A nurse gave Sharon a pamphlet on fibromyalgia, some stretching exercises, and sent her home because there was nothing more to do. "Maybe biofeedback and exercising daily would help," medical personnel suggested. Secluded in her bedroom, Sharon read the pamphlet. Afterward, she fell into a depression and cried for three days. Then, as quickly as the depression had hit, she sat bolt upright with a sudden, new conviction and said, "What do you mean I have to live with this? I don't think so." She did not yet understand what that meant. She just knew there was an answer somewhere.

Fast-forward one year to the fall of 1995 and our marriage in September. The stress of wedding preparations, a honeymoon trip, and her job induced a major flare-up. At the same time, Sharon had made plans to attend *a GATEWAY VOYAGE*® at The Monroe Institute in October. The travel, new situation, new people, and unfamiliar experiences compounded her existing pain into a severe attack during the first two days of the program. In spite of the

discomfort, she found the people interesting and the *GATEWAY* journeys compelling. By the end of the week, Sharon awakened to the realization that her body no longer hurt!

Why? How could a week at the Institute create such a turnaround? Research shows (and both EAI's and Sharon's experience verify) that persons afflicted with fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, and other immune dysfunction syndromes do not sleep well. They have trouble getting to sleep, staying asleep, and achieving restorative sleep. Indeed, their EEG sleeping patterns are abnormal (Fan and Blanton 1994). "Unless sleeping patterns get better, the patient won't get better" (Sherman 1992). Therefore, Hemi-Sync tapes are uniquely suited to help these sufferers. Sharon returned home, and within two weeks, pain flared up again. I suggested that she use a sleep tape each night as she had done at TMI. That was the beginning of a full recovery for her, as well as the birth of the *Sleep Better Workshop.*

The Hemi-Sync technology assists a willing participant to sleep in numerous ways. First, the tones gently lead the brain from normal beta consciousness to deep delta sleep via the Frequency Following Response. Any tape with Focus 10, the state of "mind awake/body asleep," assists in this process. Second, on some of the sleep tapes, verbal instruction plays a role in reducing "mind chatter." Many of our clients' overactive minds start to solve all the world's problems at bedtime. After that list is finished, these same minds seek out potential new problems to solve or, at least, worry about! Verbal instruction shifts their focus. Third, some Hemi-Sync sleep tapes include a progressive relaxation exercise. Through this exercise, the user learns to identify where stress is stored in the body and let it go. Fourth, other selections use an enjoyable verbally guided tour—a "bedtime story for big kids." Fifth, for some the simple act of lying in bed is so painful that it prevents sleep. The *Pain Control* tape addresses this issue directly by helping to reduce the pain signals and subsequently leading them into deep sleep.

Hemi-Sync sleep tapes also help break the sleeplessness habit. After a few successes, the tapes reinforce normal sleeping behavior, and falling asleep gets easier and easier. The expectation of sleeping well becomes the norm. Sleeping confidence returns. This positive expectation reinforces other behaviors. After many nights of putting troubles into an Energy Conversion Box, clients begin to do it automatically. Mind chatter becomes markedly reduced and, eventually, almost nonexistent. After many nights of progressive relaxation exercises, the very act of getting into bed triggers a relaxation response. Storing stress in muscles becomes a behavior of the past. In addition, the exercises begin to permeate the waking hours.

Most clients, once introduced to Hemi-Sync, slide from normal consciousness to deep restful sleep and need no further reinforcement to stay asleep. The body/mind seems to remember what to do and kicks into "automatic." These people have normal 90-minute sleep cycles the rest of the night and wake up refreshed. Some, however, do not. They may have a condition called A-spiking in which the brain emits a burst of alpha waves in the midst of the deep sleep

cycle (Fan and Blanton 1994). The body interprets this as a wake up signal and begins the arousal sequence. In these cases, we recommend that clients use one of the Institute's auto-reverse sleep titles. The normal 90-minute sleep cycle is recreated on tape or CD to provide continual reinforcement to the brain. The appropriate stage of sleep is maintained for the appropriate duration and in the appropriate sequence, overriding the brain's tendency to release alpha waves.

Sometimes A-spiking persists even with the influence of Hemi-Sync. When users wake up periodically throughout the night, an auto-reverse Hemi-Sync tape playing softly in the background helps them fall asleep again quickly. This also applies to those who awaken frequently to urinate during the night. It's best to accomplish this trip in minimal ambient light. Night-lights work well. Bright overhead lights stimulate the body into wakefulness. Over time, A-spiking decreases markedly due to the entrainment effect of Hemi-Sync. The brain seems to relearn more normal patterns.

Persons with fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, and other immune dysfunction syndromes do not receive the deep delta sleep that is necessary for good health. The affected brain seems to lack the ability to enter delta sleep or, once there, cannot maintain the cycle for the proper amount of time. Our clients and Goldenberg's (1989) describe this awakening unrefreshed pattern as ". . . feeling like a truck had hit them in the night, even though they may have slept eight or nine hours." During a normal 90-minute sleep cycle, 20 percent of the time should be spent in delta sleep (Coren 1996, 31). During this crucial eighteen minutes, hormones critical for muscle maintenance are released (Research spotlight 1994; Dunkin 1993; FAGW1 1995). Without this time in delta sleep, the body goes unconscious, but the restorative work is left undone. Symptoms of sleep deprivation set in. If lack of delta sleep persists, fibromyalgia-like symptoms—such as persistent and severe muscle pain—appear. Restoring proper delta sleep reduces or eliminates fibromyalgia symptoms (Leininger 1992; Doherty and Jones 1995).

Hemi-Sync assists the brain to enter and maintain health-promoting delta-wave patterns. Sleep is a learned behavior. Consistent use of the tapes every night upon retiring entrains the brain to this restorative habit. The change seems to be permanent. Thankfully, once my wife, Sharon, was on a program of using the tapes every night, improvement occurred almost immediately (within two weeks). It was nine months before Sharon achieved consistent, normal sleeping patterns without Hemi-Sync. Most clients reclaim this sleep skill much sooner. Although Sharon's learning time was longer than average, after two years, she was pain free.

Hemi-Sync sleep technology provides a drug-free solution that is gentle and easy to administer and has a permanent effect. Hemi-Sync is cost-effective, portable, and teaches additional healthful living skills. These skills are taught in the *Sleep Better Workshop* and through use of the *POSITIVE IMMUNITY* Program. *POSITIVE IMMUNITY* tapes provide layers of additional benefits. As people learn to sleep and move into their bodies' normal rhythms, they also learn

how to boost their immune systems. We augment the *POSITIVE IMMUNITY* Program with *HUMAN PLUS De-Discomfort* for off-tape pain control.

Case Report

L. B. and her husband are caretakers of a senior citizen high-rise apartment complex. After being diagnosed with severe fibromyalgia by a regional medical center, she recalls this medical advice: “You will never work again. Go to Social Security, get disability, and learn to live with it the best you can. . . . Fibromyalgia will never kill you, but you may wish it did.” She came to us in desperation because relief from standard and alternative medical approaches was limited. Within a month of attending the EAI’s *Sleep Better Workshop*, L. B. wrote, “... I have experienced some full nights’ sleep, free of medications, for the first time in one and one-half years. I came to the workshop excited about getting some help for my severe insomnia, yet apprehensive and full of concerns that this would not work for me. I am a Christian, raised in a Missouri Synod Lutheran background which, as you know, forbids ‘hypnosis,’ certain types of meditation, etc. I talked to some people about this workshop, and with all the gross ignorance out there, was warned that this might be ‘satanistic!’ Your straightforward, scientific approach calmed my anxieties.

“I had been to the major clinics for health problems starting with Lyme disease since 1992, and even to the psychiatric clinic to obtain help after being told that this was ‘all in my head.’ We even tried biofeedback to help with the pain. No one, and I repeat, NO ONE [emphasis in original] was able to help with the sleep disturbance. My doctor was giving me sleeping pills and Trazadone®, an antidepressant that has a major side effect of sleepiness. He told me that if I refused to take the medications to finally get some sleep, I would end up in the mental hospital SOON [emphasis in original]! Desperate, I tried these too, and finally was able to get some ‘drug-induced’ sleep. The side effects were terrible! I quit the Trazadone and cut the sleeping pills in half. I just had to continue taking them in order to fall asleep.

“Imagine my surprise and delight to realize that I had actually ‘clicked out’ for part of one of the tapes on the first day of your *Sleep Better Workshop*!! Since then I have been using the tapes every night and find that I have more energy and am getting back to my ‘pre-sick’ work abilities. I need to learn to pace myself, however. I’ve had pain from overdoing as a result of this new burst of energy I feel. [L. B. washed every window in her complex two days after the workshop!]

“I am very much aware that Hemi-Sync is not a Magic Bullet but a progressive process. If there were any magic bullets, I think with all the clinics I have been through, one of the doctors would have discovered it! I know I have to work consistently with the tapes to benefit from and feel more comfortable with all these new tools you have provided me with for healing, pain, etc. . . .” [Used with permission, May 1996.]

Two years later, in June 1998, we followed up with L. B. She reported that Hemi-Sync brain entrainment had permanently changed her sleeping pattern. She now sleeps almost every night “like a log!” without using Hemi-Sync. She estimates that she averages seven hours of sleep, without interruption, awaking refreshed. If there is an occasional “bad night,” she can usually pinpoint an increased stress in her life as the cause. In those cases, L B. puts on a sleep tape and has a “refresher course” for that evening.

L. B. has not seen a doctor since the *Sleep Better Workshop.* “No reason to,” she says. “I feel wonderful. I now do everything I did before. I work a regular day, and then some. I can lift everything I could before. The docs told me I would never be able to lift much again. I may have an occasional pain from overexertion, but it’s like the old days before fibromyalgia, normal aches. Never anywhere near as severe as before. Essentially I am now pain free! The *POSITIVE IMMUNITY* Program is so helpful. When I was in the midst of the fibromyalgia battle, I would be susceptible to every bug that went around. Now I hardly ever get sick. Tell those doubting Thomases that my sister is married to a Missouri Synod minister. They now have the tapes [*POSITIVE IMMUNITY* Program] in their church library!”

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